AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for processing shipment and return of a package containing items from a Sender to a Recipient, the method comprising the steps of:

electronically storing package data, for the package, and including item data, for the items in the package, in a database, before shipment occurs;

electronically retrieving shipment tracking data, for tracking shipment of the package from the Sender to the Recipient and return of one or more items of the items of the package from the Recipient to the Sender, from a shipping mechanism;

electronically adding the shipment tracking data to the database;

electronically correlating the package data in the database with the shipment tracking data for the package;

electronically determining whether the package requires customs clearance and, if so, electronically generating the appropriate customs documentation or data transmission to a customs broker;

permitting an authorized user to query the database for processing the shipment of the package from the Sender to the Recipient and the return from the Recipient to the Sender of the one or more items of the items of the package; and

rendering data for display to [[an]] the authorized user, based on a query of the database for shipping parameters of the package from the Sender to the Recipient and return from the Recipient to the Sender of the one or more items of the items of the package.

2. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:

electronically assigning the package to a specific combination of a shipper and shipping method based on the package data.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the package data includes at least the originating address and the destination address, and the item data includes a description of the items in the package, said method further comprising the step of:

using the package data to electronically calculate shipping charges and electronically generate invoices associated with the shipment.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 4, wherein the item data includes the description and value of each item.

6. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 4, wherein the step of electronically storing package data comprises transmitting package data via the Internet.

7. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said permitting step comprises receiving a query over a computer network and transmitting data from the database over the computer network in response to the query parameters.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 7, wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

9. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

electronically adding returned item information to the database if items from the package are returned to the Sender;

in the case of international shipments, electronically preparing duty and tax refund claims based on the returned item information and the corresponding item data; and

electronically adding duty and tax refund information to the database.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein said permitting step comprises receiving a query over a computer network and transmitting data from the database over the computer network in response to the query parameters.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

12-22. (Cancelled)

23. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
selecting a shipping assignment for the package based on the package data.

24. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
generating appropriate shipping documents for the package.

25. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 24, wherein said shipping documents comprise package labels.

26. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 24, wherein said shipping documents comprise shipping manifests.

27. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 24, wherein said shipping documents comprise customs forms.

28. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
providing a Web site page for permitting the authorized user to query the database.

29. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:
generating duty and tax refund claims based upon receipt of returned item data.

30. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
adding returned item information to said database if items from a package are returned to the Sender, and
preparing duty and tax refund claims based on the returned item information.

31. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the method is implemented with a computer program product including one or more computer-readable instructions embedded therein and configured to cause one or more computer processors to perform the steps of the method.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented system for processing shipment and return of a package containing items from a Sender to a Recipient, the system comprising:

means for electronically storing package data, for the package, and including item data, for the items in the package, in a database, before shipment occurs;

means for electronically retrieving shipment tracking data, for tracking shipment of the package from the Sender to the Recipient and return of one or more items of the items of the package from the Recipient to the Sender;

means for electronically adding the shipment tracking data to the database;

means for electronically correlating the package data in the database with the shipment tracking data for the package;

means for electronically determining whether the package requires customs clearance and, if so, means for electronically generating the appropriate customs documentation or data transmission to a customs broker;

means for permitting an authorized user to query the database for processing the shipment of the package from the Sender to the Recipient and the return from the Recipient to the Sender of the one or more items of the items of the package; and

means for rendering data for display to [[an]] the authorized user, based on a query of the database for shipping parameters of the package from the Sender to the Recipient and return from the Recipient to the Sender of the one or more items of the items of the package.

34. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:

means for electronically assigning the package to a specific combination of a shipper and shipping method based on the package data.

35. (Cancelled)

36. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, wherein the package data includes at least the originating address and the destination address, and the item data includes a description of the items in the package, said system further comprising:

means for using the package data to electronically calculate shipping charges and electronically generate invoices associated with the shipment.

37. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 36, wherein the item data includes the description and value of each item.

38. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 36, wherein the means for electronically storing package data includes means for transmitting package data via the Internet.

39. (Previously presented) The system of claim 36, wherein said permitting means includes means for receiving a query over a computer network and means for transmitting data from the database over the computer network in response to the query parameters.

40. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 39, wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

41. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:

means for electronically adding returned item information to the database if items from the package are returned to the Sender;

in the case of international shipments, means for electronically preparing duty and tax refund claims based on the returned item information and the corresponding item data; and

means for electronically adding duty and tax refund information to the database.

42. (Previously presented) The system of claim 41, wherein said permitting means comprises means for receiving a query over a computer network and means for transmitting data from the database over the computer network in response to the query parameters.

43. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 42, wherein the computer network comprises the Internet.

44. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:
means for selecting a shipping assignment for the package based on the package data.

45. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:
means for generating appropriate shipping documents for the package.

46. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 45, wherein said shipping documents comprise package labels.

47. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 45, wherein said shipping documents comprise shipping manifests.

48. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 45, wherein said shipping documents comprise customs forms.

49. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:
means for providing a Web site page for permitting the authorized user to query the database.

50. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:

means for generating duty and tax refund claims based upon receipt of returned item data.

51. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 33, further comprising:

means for adding returned item information to said database if items from a package are returned to the Sender, and

means for preparing duty and tax refund claims based on the returned item information.

52. (Canceled)